

public servant in the State of California.

I wish to extend to Mrs. Burke, who served as a Representative of California's 37th Congressional District from 1973 to 1979, my sincere congratulations for the decades of dedicated service that she has given to her Nation, her State, and her county.

She is currently serving as chair of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and is in the final year of her fourth term on the board.

For the past 15 years, she has represented the Second Supervisorial District.

Supervisor Burke will be remembered as a devoted public servant who amassed numerous accomplishments and countless awards—in addition to inspiring women and minorities to pursue careers in public service.

As a product of the Los Angeles Unified School District, Mrs. Burke developed an interest in public speaking and participated in several citywide competitions during her high school years.

Her involvement in these events and many extracurricular activities helped her to obtain scholarships to the UC Berkeley and later at UCLA.

In 1956, Mrs. Burke received a law degree from the University of Southern California School of Law.

It was difficult for women, particularly African Americans, to practice law, because many private law firms showed little interest in hiring women as attorneys.

So Mrs. Burke opened her own law office in Los Angeles.

She specialized in immigration and civil rights and fought segregation in real estate law.

Mrs. Burke was active in the civil rights movement with memberships in various local and national organizations.

She subsequently landed a staff attorney position on the McCone Commission, which investigated the causes of the 1965 Watts riots in Los Angeles.

She became a spokesperson for the underrepresented and, through a grassroots campaign, won her first political office in 1966 as a California State assemblywoman.

It was a position she held for the next 6 years.

In 1972, Mrs. Burke became the first African American woman—west of the Mississippi River—to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

She was selected to serve as vice chair of the 1972 Democratic National Convention in Miami and later on the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

She also was the first Congresswoman to give birth while in office.

Mrs. Burke did not seek re-election to Congress in 1978 but instead ran for attorney general of California.

She won the Democratic nomination, but subsequently was defeated in the general election.

In 1979, Mrs. Burke was appointed by the Governor of California to fill a va-

cancy in the Fourth Supervisorial District in Los Angeles County and served in that capacity until the end of 1980.

She also was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Board of Regents of the University of California in 1982.

Two years later, Mrs. Burke was selected to serve as vice chair of the 1984 U.S. Olympics Organizing Committee.

In 1992, she became the first African American elected to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

She played a significant role in the 2000 Democratic National Convention, hosting an event for hundreds of African American elected officials nationwide.

Supervisor Burke represents nearly 2.5 million residents in the Second District of the Nation's largest county.

Her efforts primarily have focused on improving the lives of children, encouraging economic development, and improving transportation throughout Los Angeles, as well as promoting public social services, health care for the uninsured, and affirmative action for women and the economically disadvantaged.

In addition, she has taken the lead in establishing a county archives system.

These are just some of Yvonne Brathwaite Burke's significant accomplishments.

On behalf of the U.S. Senate and the State of California, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for her immeasurable contributions throughout her renowned career.

With sincere best wishes, I congratulate Supervisor Burke upon her retirement from elective office.

And I am pleased to join her many coworkers; her family: her husband William, her daughter Autumn and stepdaughter Christine; friends; and associates in wishing her health, happiness, and continued good fortune in her future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING EASTER SEALS

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I wish today to commend a standout chapter of a renowned organization, one that has been responsible for bringing light to the lives of countless Americans throughout its existence. Easter Seals Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore is celebrating its 60th year of providing critical help to those in need.

In 1948, the organization was started to meet the needs of children with disabilities, and it has grown exponentially since then. This chapter served 18,000 Delawareans last year through eight locations, and they now have an annual operating budget of \$15 million.

The services provided by the staff and volunteers at Easter Seals are well known: speech and hearing therapy, assistive technology, and job training are just a few of the ways they help children and adults with disabilities lead independent lives in their communities.

As we embark on spring this year, it is appropriate to recall the symbol of

Easter Seals: the lily. The lily makes us all think of rebirth and new life, which is exactly what Easter Seals provides to those they help. It is why the lily has appeared on every Easter "Seal" produced since the 1950s.

I would be remiss if I thanked Easter Seals Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore without recognizing its driving force for the last half century. Sandra Tuttle, who has been associated with the organization for nearly 50 years—including as its president and CEO since 1978—is stepping aside from her formal role. Her leadership has been the engine of this remarkable organization; her devotion, professionalism, and guidance are known to all associated with Easter Seals.

I wish her the best of luck in all her future endeavors and thank her from the bottom of my heart for what she has helped this organization become. The lives she has touched are without number. She truly is an angel walking among us.

I know I am not the first to thank Easter Seals in this Chamber, and I doubt I will be the last. This incredible organization, started by a few people trying to make a difference for disabled children, has blossomed into the model for all such groups in America. I thank my local chapter for its work, congratulate it on this momentous occasion, and hope that its influence will continue to grow for years to come.

CONGRATULATING THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it is a privilege to be able to offer my most sincere congratulations to the State of Israel as it celebrates its 60th anniversary of independence. I am so proud that Israel has not only survived, but has become one of the most prosperous and successful democracies anywhere in the world.

The Israeli National Anthem, Hatikvah, means, "The Hope." That is really what the modern State of Israel has been about over these 60 years. Founded after the horrors of the Holocaust, the Jewish people created a place where their faith and history could be secured and passed from generation to generation. In this place, never again would dictators or fanatics be able to systematically persecute, terrorize, and murder entire communities or an entire people.

Hope sustained the Jewish people through 3,000 years of persecution that culminated in the evils of the Holocaust. And for the last 60 years, that same sense of hope for the future has allowed the people of Israel to persevere in the face of continual assaults on its very existence, whether they are in the form of war, terrorism, or assassination.

As Israel celebrates this milestone, I am proud to say that the United States has been by its side, offering support and assistance, and watching it grow